

My Billy.

As your letter only came yesterday you see how good I am to sit down & write to you so soon. You tempt me to do so by saying you will write again at once if I do. Yes. you don't write nearly often enough & I'm sure you've not told me of millions of things which now I shall never know. I write in great difficulty as Clive & Quentin are carrying on a discussion about Mendelssohnism, based partly on Angelica's being said to be so much more Stephen than Bill. While I & Q are evidently a mixture. Write nice float through my head - I must try & concentrate on you for once -

I suppose you must do as you like about paying me. It all seems very absurd but I don't intend to be anything but business like - let me tell you first therefore what any of the facts you dislike so much. Clive is now definitely leaving on May 13th so after that unless Roger comes which seems quite uncertain we shall be alone. Therefore I really think you & Leonard might come this way. I can at least will be very much disappointed if you don't.

I am again being persecuted by the Bedford Estate. This time it's not very serious I suppose - They objected to the seager vent in the basement. I am not so much surprised at their doing so as at their never having done so before during the years it has been there. I shall have to have it removed & Bunny must so unwashed which doesn't much matter but it may mean, if Vita should take the house, that the basement bath would have to be put elsewhere. However I see that very likely she won't take it. You never told me what your latest ideas about Grace were. Clive now says that Saigon is definitely abandoned by the troops & therefore by him. He intends to let his room & Alice for a year - & live mostly in Paris. I think he very

likely really will do this. It's more practicable than Saigon
& I think he has at the moment a real dislike of London.

In that case Grace can't go to him. But anyhow I think
it's really impossible for me to give her up - I must simply
find a room for her & have her as a daily. I see that
I am likely to be in London a good deal next year
as I shan't like to go away for long until Angelica has
become quite established at school. So Grace can come
& look after me & we can see how it works & perhaps
make some plan for her employment if I do want to go
away more later. So prepare for a fair amount of my
company in the near future, but don't therefore think you can
dispense with it in the immediate future.

Our Citroën is of course a marvel. Let me advise you
not to let Martin mend your clutch - but this advice may
be too late I expect. He did the Renault one very badly.
We whisk about all over the place in high respectability.

Did Clive send you a very black account of life
here with Sabine? I dare say he did. He finds her
unpleasantly stupid & I think rather blames me for inviting
such a person into the house. Of course it is a bore
having her at lunch & dinner, but we can manage
meals really fairly easily if that is all, as it is.

Clive in fact talks so much to her that they severely
last longer than they need. She isn't so stupid, but
absolutely uncultured. However she is nice & looks after
the children very well & spends most of her evenings with
Grace. So we might easily have done worse. We all
have to talk French a great deal which is very good
for us & the children certainly learn much more from her
than they did from their daily lessons with Mademoiselle.
On the whole I think it tends to a smoother working of the
household.

Can it be true about Angus? Is he mad? or simply anxious to

avoid employment at all costs? He wrote to Duncan as if it were all decided. I agree with you that nothing more can be done if he really has simply let this slip. I believe he has immense belief in himself as a writer really & does all he can not to get involved in anything else, which will easily succeed in doing if you don't out-wit him. But I think this was the last attempt & it has failed. He'll continue to exist - beautifully for ever now. It would be cruel probably to interfere.

Have you seen the Macons? (Rose who is I suppose in London. Do you understand why Macon is such a success with some? I've never seen him so I have no views but am simply curious. You have to entertain him of course. I suppose if you slip into society again that you'll be more of a celebrity than ever & I hope it will lead you into odd haunts to let me of. But why didn't you go to Lucy Clifford's (as she always was) funeral? I made sure you would. You'd have seen Sydney Waterhouse & the old Poles together & endless others. What an opportunity to have missed! I really think you might have thought of me - Anyhow send me Ethel's reply to your letter which I see will be invaluable. What about writing to poor Turkey too? or is she dead? You see I have nothing to send you but the dullest of all facts or speculations on the possible wonders that are happening to you - even worse -

May 1st I began this 2 days ago & of course couldn't continue it & now it seems almost too dull to read. However as your second letter has come I suppose you'll be very cross if I don't send you something, no matter what. You seem to be sending me a great deal of money which you may live to regret if C. A. Douglas prosecutes you. It would be great fun for us but I can't be what he is so foolish. With you tell Vita, as you seem destined to be very busy & that I don't intend anything to put the house into an agent's hands till the end of June. As I judge from the letters I get constantly it ought to be

perfectly easy to get rid of it at market. The only thing is that some other private person might want it, as I have told Bunny & Douglas about it. But in that case I would let Vita know first. As for the premium I don't see why they should pay me early. It will probably mean I squander the money but perhaps it doesn't much matter.

Roger makes most peculiar, considering he was prepared to rush home from Cassis on Hanson's account. Have you heard nothing of him? I haven't had a word since he left Paris. I hope you'll send me an account of ^{Hanson} ~~him~~ ^{him} ~~also~~ of the drawingroom meeting at 37. I feel a little creepy at the thought of Mary invading the house to make arrangements.

We drove yesterday to Aix. It was a heavenly day. Not cloudless but with a hot sun & very beautiful. Dinner & I spent an hour in the old lady's shop & almost bought a jettee. I think we shall get it. Also I was tempted by some rather nice writing tables. There will be plenty for you when you come. I believe too there's a very good market on Sundays at Toulon where great bargains are to be got.

Tomorrow Quentin leaves us & Cory comes for a week. I can't imagine what he'll do here but I think he may stumble up with the other Colonel.

Today we had the Currys to tea. They are quite nice. He's a painter, half French & the French but English speaking. We knew them here two years ago. I feel however so completely unfitted for society that I determined never again to ask anyone to tea. The effort is so great. I admire your capacity to lunch with Cleto - I see my studio will be a complete hermitage. Ring 3 times remember & come in by the basement. Then you will find me always alone. Yours V.D.

La Bergerie.

May 10.

1929

This is a terrible dull letter. but the normal inevitable result of conversation of a second for a week. but I send you something for practical reasons. I have recovered a little perhaps I can send you something for practical reasons.

My Billy.
watch a way very much please.
I have a shell into soon.

To begin about your plans - you will be most welcome whenever you like to come - I don't know whether anyone else will be here - I have heard nothing from Roger - He is the only possible person. Perhaps you'll know more of his projects than I do. About the rest of your suggesting there is more doubt. as Périgieux is a very long way from here - We took about 4 days to get to it last year, but even if we took less it would mean being away at least a week. & if the children are with her as I expect they will be I am afraid that is rather impossible for me. We might so somewhere nearer at hand, but I don't know how far Leonard will feel inclined to come - I thought Julian couldn't get away till about the 15th but perhaps I'm wrong. Also Quentin I think intended to come with him. But you may have later news of their plans than I have. However, the question of a tour could perhaps be left a little - at any rate you can consider it with Leonard & Julian & let me know, only I can't be away very long I think while Sabine & the children are here - as I expect they will be till somewhere about June 20th. You rather alarm me about Julian's driving. Do express caution on him if you can. I do so whenever possible but I think he thinks me foolishly cautious. Com came last Thursday. We have had a terrific week of it. Com came last Thursday conversation has hardly ceased since. Not that he is so very talkative, but he seemed to have the effect on Clive of making him behave as though he were at Seend. (This

La Bergerie.

May 10.

1929

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My (Daisy) will write soon.
watch & way very much pleased.
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is I know not indiscreet.) Duncan at last caught a glimpse
of life at Seend & was horrified as I always am, but interested.
The most astonishing flow of male conversation was kept up
which I cannot describe, all apparently for the sake of talk
which almost drove me wild. Cory is very simple & nice
really & quite unpretentious, but as I say he had
this awful effect on Clive. The worst was at dinner
on the evening with Sabine when Clive's reluctance
almost too difficult to deal with. She didn't know
how to take it, Cory became rather uneasy & jocular,
my only object was to put a stop to it but I couldn't
as they insisted on drinking endless sips of brandy.
I really think Julian is right, but I think Clive
is almost insane about females. He's not the least
attracted actually by Sabine, but he simply can't
help the whole time trying to get up a flirtation with
her & saying more & more tender things than he

while the poor girl stands by very well. I try to en-
quire what he thinks of it - but he sees no sense in it.
So we shall soon have peace & Cory has gone today
& so tonight there is at last silence & I can
write. We spent a night at Arles & went to
Aix les Bains, we went to Marseilles & finally today
we have been to Toulon, so I think we did our
duty thoroughly.

I had a scrupulously honorable letter from Vita saying
that as they couldn't decide about 37 I must feel bound
to give them the refusal any time. However I don't
suppose I shall do anything about letting it till I
get back in July. So as a matter of fact they can
consider it as almost certainly free till then & will
you tell her this? I won't consider myself bound, but I
would let her know if anything else should crop up.

He is much more depressed than can be true. I hope you will wear some - but could you bring with you - 3 A. L. in mauls for mules 11 - 12 - 13 - 14 - 15 - 16 - 17 - 18 - 19 - 20 - 21 - 22 - 23 - 24 - 25 - 26 - 27 - 28 - 29 - 30 - 31 - 32 - 33 - 34 - 35 - 36 - 37 - 38 - 39 - 40 - 41 - 42 - 43 - 44 - 45 - 46 - 47 - 48 - 49 - 50 - 51 - 52 - 53 - 54 - 55 - 56 - 57 - 58 - 59 - 60 - 61 - 62 - 63 - 64 - 65 - 66 - 67 - 68 - 69 - 70 - 71 - 72 - 73 - 74 - 75 - 76 - 77 - 78 - 79 - 80 - 81 - 82 - 83 - 84 - 85 - 86 - 87 - 88 - 89 - 90 - 91 - 92 - 93 - 94 - 95 - 96 - 97 - 98 - 99 - 100 - 101 - 102 - 103 - 104 - 105 - 106 - 107 - 108 - 109 - 110 - 111 - 112 - 113 - 114 - 115 - 116 - 117 - 118 - 119 - 120 - 121 - 122 - 123 - 124 - 125 - 126 - 127 - 128 - 129 - 130 - 131 - 132 - 133 - 134 - 135 - 136 - 137 - 138 - 139 - 140 - 141 - 142 - 143 - 144 - 145 - 146 - 147 - 148 - 149 - 150 - 151 - 152 - 153 - 154 - 155 - 156 - 157 - 158 - 159 - 160 - 161 - 162 - 163 - 164 - 165 - 166 - 167 - 168 - 169 - 170 - 171 - 172 - 173 - 174 - 175 - 176 - 177 - 178 - 179 - 180 - 181 - 182 - 183 - 184 - 185 - 186 - 187 - 188 - 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1929

Given to a mayor & he feels very ill-used
But we see what must have happened.

He must not be depressed. That can be the truth?
I hope you will sweat some - but could you bring with you -
3. A little more for model 11 - 2 for model 12

May 24
with order
to bring to
read them
with order
to have
bring them
left with
see they
night.
your arrival
or directly
can't
great
excitement
M

S. Raphael near Valence where I think the Fishers spent a winter.

Today is Friday & on Tuesday Duncan & I left Cassis to stay with the Bussys. Just before I left your letter came. I meant to answer it while I was there but had not a moment. I am now sitting at a cafe by the sea in the thickest summer clothes at 9.30 PM. Three men are playing & singing & a crowd is listening. 2 two American females at the best-table making cultured conversation. Don't expect much from me therefore I am hoping to catch scraps of what they say. We drove to Roquefort spending a night at Cannes. I do think it is absurd that you should not come on these expeditions - you cannot conceive - perhaps you can - the pleasure of driving at too fast things (this country at this time of year because is clapping & does barking) & spending sleepy afternoons before driving in. If all becomes like a dream & this evening I really had the recent idea where I was, whether in France, Cornwall or Greece, after we had gone by bay after bay of perfectly calm water. I knew men opening before me at every turn. But of course you want want to hear about that so don't be afraid. I wish I could tell you instead about the Bussy family. They live in a house of magnificence. It is fitted into the rock so that the greatest possible use is made of the space. It is extraordinarily comfortable with hot water in every room & electric light etc. delicious food all in perfect order. All the colours are brilliant - the art is impeccable in every detail as Apperand, more experimental as you would expect from Simon. In fact many of the colours come straight from his pictures. He himself is as acid & intelligent as Coe. Dorothy seemed to me slightly triste whether from Sidi's recent departure or not I don't know. They are full of these travels in Egypt. It seems that the French literary world is very anxious that you should go to Portugal. I could not hold out much hope if it but said I would hand on the message. I believe Julian wants to go. It is from Aug 21st - 31st. The Bussys leave for England in a week so you may just see them.

Smoking paintings are of course the most infernal thing in the house. We
had to look at them all 2 pass remarks which was most difficult.
Then we had to look at James which are all of horrors & very
tasteful. This morning we went to Monte Carlo & played at the
littles. I was absolutely fascinated - not by the game which
seemed to me too dull for words - but then I always lose - but by
the players who are all obviously on the verge of suicide - I
could spend all my time there if I lived here. The rooms here
are lit by lamps. Last time we should cut the electric light
wires & grab all the money. But they all look ready to do.
The old ladies one sees are incredible. But I suppose I shall never
go there again. I am very glad Leonard is coming with you.

I suppose I shall hear of Julian's plans from him later. Shall
you arrive at Marseille in the morning of the 5th or when? Let
me know & we will meet you in the Citroën - it makes the
journey much easier to drive from there. Why stay only a
week? Can't you at any rate stay longer? Do consider
this - I can't promise that Roger will be here.

at last heard from him & he seems to intend to come quite
soon - & I don't think how long he'll stay. Helen I think
has vacillated to Switzerland. If Mr. Maitland dies soon as
Roger now hopes he seems (think he may) go there for the
funeral - in which case he may not be here. But anyway
he will go off & paint all day. We were as usual

fascinated by your accounts of Sydney, Desmond & all.
I hope you didn't give George my address - I am of course delighted
that Angelica hasn't been visited by Judy (the watch arrived - also the
pen - didn't I tell you? she meant to write to Leonard) Two days
before we left Cassis she appeared Horalt - Garrow Tomlin & his sister
(Helen). All will be departing when we return - so we have managed
with great skill. Garrow was I think very cross at the spring -
he can't hear the whole story of Angus. He sent his account to
Duncan. He said he had seen H.W. that all was practically settled but H.W.
was going away for a week so there was no immediate hurry. He looked
at it as decided. Then he heard the place had been

(171) La Bergerie Sunday. May 26 1929

I wrote this but didn't post it. We got home safely yesterday. Today I have heard a letter from Roger to say he has to have a new treatment for sciatica in Paris & doesn't know when he will be able to come here - so I expect you will after all find us alone. It sounds to me as though he wouldn't come for some time if at all.

Besides the mantles I am ordering from the stores a new chimney for the Aladdin & a chimney cleaner. I hope there won't be the last straw.

Don't forget to let me when you arrive so that we can meet you.

Give my love to Leonard

Yours V.B.

June 27

My Billy.

As usual I write & you surrounded by noise. They sit on the floor, they fly round my head. Last night I wrote & hear a most peculiar noise. Like some immense kettle buzzing against a pane - only it was as loud as a motor car & went on quite continuously for about an hour. I could see nothing & it remains a mystery, only today it occurred to me could it have been a noise, an Emperor or a Death Head perhaps, in the chimney? What do you think? But such peculiar things happen here - Today a fat female suddenly appeared out of the blue & said in very bad French "I am lost. Can you tell me where I am?" I asked if she was French & she said in broad Cockney no she was English. I asked her where she was & so. "I don't know" Where do you come from? I don't know. Do you want to go to Cannes? Oh No. Where do you want to go? I don't know. What can I do for you then? Well, I've got 9 children. Do you happen to have heard them? I then became hysterical, so did Sabine & the little fish. The female seemed to think it was quite natural & no laughing matter. We looking vaguely for 9 children in Provence.

Barbara

who was

the first of the family to be born in the country.

He came one day. I never found him.

He came the next day I did not. I hope

set him down. but they are possibly different

in this country they have no sense of time.

I will let you know what happens.

About the book cover, it doesn't matter in the

least. There was too little time to do anything very

much. I thought I had left space for any possible

title. Judging by the one I had, but I suppose I didn't.

Do let me know in good time about the other

one really has to let these things simmer for a

time - at least I can't depend on being able to

turn them out in a few days. Keep slow in the

head as you know.

Angelica goes back on Tuesday, straight to Barbara

where she will stay till about the 15th. If you want

her to come up with you arrange with Barbara. My

address is Pilgrim House. Frothingham. West Haling.

Leant. Also Louie (Mrs F. Pape. 50 Little Cadogan

Place. SW. 1) will, on hearing from you, meet A. at

the station, bring her to you, leave her with you &

keep as suits you & take her away again. I send

her back to Barbara. or keep her if she doesn't

come to you till she goes to Louie's home on the 15th.

Please don't bother if quite swamped with other

things. I suppose you have heard that Roger

is perfectly well, having been sent by Ellie to a
 neurologist who said the whole spinal column
 Terry was unconscious. He has to stop smoking (so
 for a cure... but really it all seems to have been
 a wild & incredible imposture. I wonder if
 you are seeing Clive. He wrote to say that he intends
 to let his flat. I can't think what he will do if
 he does. He says he is often very lonely while in
 London & Paris. That he prefers our (mine &
 Duncan's) company to most people's & seems to hope
 we shall be here a good deal & that he can
 come here too. But we shall be in London a
 good deal as far as I can see. I wish to goodness
 he could be persuaded to work. The only hope I think.
 Perhaps you are seeing him & have later theories.
 Have you heard anything about Julian's speech
 at the dinner? He said everyone was very kind
 but I gathered he had had a good deal to drink
 & slightly lost his head & ~~said~~ down before he
 had made some of his best points. I should like to
 know what anyone else thinks. He & Quentin
 are an odd couple in spite of their differences
 they really get on very well & seem to have an
 endless amount to say to each other. They argue
 by the hour. Julian was rather pleased when he
 arrived but I am afraid is getting fatter again
 However (no doubt it's my maternal prejudice) he
 really looks very splendid, having burnt a few
 brown & looking a complete savage. Quentin is
 at his best alone with us here & works a good
 deal. So do we - we are immersed in poetry.

She made a good bargain no doubt with Duncan.
who is painting 3 large works for her as well as
doing the lots of other things for less than he
could get for me for smaller painting any day.
But I dare say on the other hand her paying
me more than my market value.

I suppose you haven't found me a tenant
for this house yet?

Your short letter was very tantalizing.
I deserve a hug one to make up

Ethel reminds me of some of the worst
horror of my youth.

I think Alec Penrose is quite likely
not to take 34 - but I expect in any
case Vita will either

Yours V.B.

June 1929

Send. Then he means to go abroad. & the summer
he wants to spend here with us. Well. I don't know
where I shall spend the summer. Anyhow it's a long
way off & he has time to consider it. But I can't
take Surie very seriously as a possible bride. It seems
to me too crazy really. He talked last year of
marrying a young person - who then I imagine was
Joan. He says marry. I can't conceive that he'd
enjoy married life really with anyone on earth - except
possibly me - & then it wouldn't be he but merely
that he'd get the sort of society he likes easily & that
he certainly wouldn't do with Surie or Joan. But I
expect he merely plays with the idea. I myself
think the only solution is work & not a bride.

How fascinating your judging Mary at Charleston -
you didn't tell me half enough about it. You seem
to like Raymond & Frankie free far better than
you come to see us. Yes, darling, of course I wouldn't
for worlds persuade you to come, I know you have
so much on your hands, only what fond delight
your presence gives my own precious to your
poor old sister - I'm glad you recognise my true
character. Mind you write daily. Angelica & I
should be most grateful if you'd give us - not you
of course but your husband as we don't want to
end in a ditch. to her school - if you're free then.
My plan is to
but don't know if you are not.

return to Paris on Monday the 22nd (she looked it
up in a calendar many times). to London on Wed the
24th & to the Hotel (near Chelmsford 40
miles from London) on Thursday the 25th. If that

suits you so much the better. It's a tiresome place to sit
by train & I don't want to spend very long there as
it's almost the end of term & they will be very busy.

So it would be very nice if we could drive & perhaps
have a picnic somewhere - but don't bother as I
suppose in the last resort the Renault is available.

We are still labouring hard at Dotie. It's an
appalling job. I suppose as usual we shall come back
with several tons of luggage of the most unwieldy kind.

I find it very pleasant living here with Duncan &
my two sons - what odd creatures they are. Julian
is really very splendid now - a deep copper colour.
But so huge that he breaks chairs & all he touches
& walks like a giant. It seems very familiar however.
He carries a chair & table & typewriter down to Angolia;
but & sits & writes & reads all the morning. Quentin
retires to the lower room at Fortrose & paints.
They appear for meals when we are all inclined to
get slightly tipsy & rather incoherent & Julian
becomes helpful with laughter. They are extraordinarily
babyish & absurdly self-fashioned really though Quentin
pretends to great up-to-dateness. But he's very simple
& charming here & free from mannerism.

Have you seen Angolia I wonder? I miss her very
much - she supplies all the feminine element which
as you know is essential to my life.

Transparent green flies (the lampshade) the table
is covered with winged & six legged creatures. I found the
skeleton of the cicada who spent my room on a Rembrandt
canvas the other day. So I must stop for another
crisis in. Yours VIC